

TITLE 67
STATE GOVERNMENT AND STATE AFFAIRS

CHAPTER 90
IDAHO RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP ACT

67-9001. SHORT TITLE. This act may be referred to and cited as the "Idaho Rural Development Partnership Act."

[67-9001, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 703.]

67-9002. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The legislature finds that:

(1) Rural development has been given a high priority as a means of achieving a sound and mutually beneficial balance between the economies, culture, infrastructure and community vitality of rural and urban areas of Idaho.

(2) (a) During the last half century, the legislature has enacted many laws and established many programs to provide resources to rural communities;

(b) Efforts have been made, and continue to be needed, to coordinate rural development programs; and

(c) During the last decade, the national rural development partnership and its principal components, the national rural development council and state rural development councils, have successfully provided opportunities for collaboration and coordination among federal agencies and between federal agencies and states, nonprofit organizations, the private sector, tribal governments, and other entities committed to rural advancement.

(3) State rural development councils were established in 1990 by Presidential executive order as vehicles to help coordinate rural programs.

(4) The congress of the United States authorized and codified a national system of rural development coordination and cooperation with enactment of the "national rural development partnership act" (7 U.S.C. 2008m).

(5) The national rural development partnership has been recognized as a model of new governance and as an example of the effectiveness of collaboration between the federal, state, local, tribal, private, and nonprofit sectors in addressing the needs of the rural communities.

(6) Partnerships between governmental and nongovernmental entities can extend scarce funding through collaboration and cooperation.

(7) The continued success and efficacy of the Idaho rural development partnership could be enhanced through specific legislative authorization removing any statutory barriers that could detract from the benefits potentially achieved through the partnership's unique structure.

[67-9002, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 703.]

67-9003. DEFINITIONS. As used in this chapter:

(1) "Agency with rural responsibilities" means any public entity of the state of Idaho that:

(a) Implements a provision of law targeted at rural areas; or

(b) Administers a program that has a significant impact on rural areas.

(2) "Community" means a group of people linked by common policy, common social interests and interaction with one another.

(3) "National rural development partnership" means the organization created by the national rural development partnership act (7 U.S.C. 2008m).

(4) "Partnership" means the Idaho rural development partnership established by section [67-9004](#), Idaho Code.

(5) "Rural area" means:

(a) All the territory of the state of Idaho that is not within the boundary of any standard metropolitan statistical area as defined by the United States office of management and budget;

(b) All territory within any standard metropolitan statistical area described in paragraph (a) of this subsection within a census tract having a population density of less than twenty (20) persons per square mile, as determined according to the most recent census of the United States as of any date; and

(c) Such areas as the partnership may identify as rural.

[67-9003, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 704; am. 2016, ch. 90, sec. 1, p. 278.]

67-9004. IDAHO RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP CREATED . There is hereby created an independent public body corporate and politic to be known as the "Idaho rural development partnership," which shall be a public instrumentality of the state and its exercise of the powers conferred by this chapter is and shall be deemed to be the performance of essential public functions and purposes. The Idaho rural development partnership shall be exempt from taxation, and shall be an entity of the state of Idaho as provided in the tort claims act, [chapter 9, title 6](#), Idaho Code, and shall be entitled to all the protection as provided in the tort claims act, [chapter 9, title 6](#), Idaho Code.

[67-9004, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 704.]

67-9005. RESPONSIBILITIES. The partnership's responsibilities shall be to:

(1) Assess community and economic conditions of rural Idaho;

(2) Advise the governor and the legislature on public policy and strategies to identify the community and economic development opportunities in rural Idaho;

(3) Act as a clearinghouse of information and as a referral center on rural programs and policies;

(4) Conduct outreach to rural communities and facilitate communication between rural residents and public and private organizations that provide services to rural communities;

(5) Identify organizations, authorities and resources to address various aspects of rural development;

(6) Serve as a nonpartisan forum for identifying and understanding rural issues from all perspectives;

(7) Improve intergovernmental coordination, private and public cooperation, and to seek out opportunities for new partnerships to achieve rural development goals within existing governmental and community structures;

(8) Foster coordinated approaches to rural development that support local initiatives, with an imperative not to usurp the individual missions of any member organizations or duplicate effort;

(9) Seek solutions to unnecessary impediments to rural development within Idaho;

(10) Work cooperatively and seek solutions to impediments with the national rural development partnership and other state rural development councils; and

(11) Submit an annual report to the governor outlining the work and accomplishments of the partnership.

[67-9005, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 704; am. 2016, ch. 90, sec. 2, p. 279.]

67-9006. BOARD OF DIRECTORS. (1) The partnership shall be managed by a board of directors that shall include the following members:

- (a) A representative appointed by the governor;
- (b) The directors from not more than five (5) agencies as appointed by the governor;
- (c) The director of the cooperative extension service in the state of Idaho;
- (d) Representatives from the following federal agencies: the United States department of agriculture's rural development, farm service agency and forest service, the United States department of the interior's bureau of land management, the United States department of commerce's economic development administration, the United States environmental protection agency, and the United States department of housing and urban development;
- (e) Four (4) state legislators consisting of one (1) member appointed by the president pro tempore of the senate, one (1) member appointed by the minority leader of the senate, one (1) member appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and one (1) member appointed by the minority leader of the house of representatives;
- (f) A representative chosen by each of the federally recognized Indian tribes in the state of Idaho;
- (g) Four (4) representatives from organizations of local government in the state of Idaho, as appointed by the governor, one (1) each representing cities, counties, economic development agencies, and resource conservation and development organizations;
- (h) Two (2) representatives, as appointed by the governor, from for-profit business organizations, to include agribusiness and other businesses operating with special emphasis on rural areas of the state of Idaho;
- (i) A representative of the principal contractor for the United States department of energy's Idaho national laboratory; and
- (j) Five (5) rural leaders chosen by the governor representing private entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce, nonprofit and community-based organizations, living in rural Idaho and representing a geographic balance across the state.

(2) Nonvoting, ad hoc members may be included on the board to assist with specific issues and projects as necessary.

(3) Except for appointments by the governor under this section, members of the board of directors shall serve at the pleasure of the organization or entity the member represents. Board members appointed under subsection (1)(j) of this section shall serve four (4) year terms concurrent with the governor's term.

(4) The duties of the board of directors shall be to:

- (a) Elect a cochair as provided in section [67-9007](#), Idaho Code;

(b) Appoint and employ, and at its pleasure discharge, an executive director and to prescribe the duties and fix the compensation of the executive director; and

(c) Establish offices, to incur expenses, to enter into contracts and to create such liabilities as may be reasonable for the proper administration and enforcement of this chapter.

(5) The board of directors shall hold a meeting at least annually. A majority of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum.

[67-9006, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 705; am. 2016, ch. 90, sec. 3, p. 279.]

67-9007. COCHAIRS. (1) The board of directors of the partnership shall have two (2) cochaairs, one (1) elected by the partnership's board of directors from among the board's membership, and the other appointed by the governor. The cochair elected by the board of directors shall serve a two (2) year term, and may be reelected until a total of four (4) consecutive years have been served, following which that individual will be disqualified for election to the position of cochair until at least one (1) term of office has intervened.

(2) The duties of the cochaairs shall be to:

(a) Set operating policies; and

(b) Manage the partnership budget and staff, including the hiring of an executive director, subject to approval by the board of directors.

[67-9007, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 706; am. 2016, ch. 90, sec. 4, p. 280.]

67-9008. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. The executive director of the partnership shall:

(1) Manage the day-to-day operations of the partnership as directed by the board of directors and the cochaairs;

(2) Be a person with the skills necessary to manage a diverse public organization effectively and with broad experience in building and sustaining networks and partnerships; and shall be hired through an open and competitive process when a vacancy occurs, after a broad, statewide advertising campaign without any preselection;

(3) Hire an assistant, and such temporary or part-time employees as may be necessary to achieve the partnership's purposes, provided approved by the cochaairs of the board of directors and the availability of funding.

[67-9008, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 706; am. 2016, ch. 90, sec. 5, p. 280.]

67-9009. GENERAL MEMBERSHIP. The general membership of the partnership shall be open to any and all individuals or organizations desiring to assist with the partnership's purposes, including all local, tribal, state, and federal governments, as well as for-profit and not-for-profit private organizations having an interest in or some responsibility for rural development in the state of Idaho. No voting privileges on the partnership's board of directors are granted by virtue of general membership.

[67-9009, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 707.]

67-9010. PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS OF STATE EMPLOYEES. In conducting the performance evaluation of an employee of an agency who has worked with the partnership, that agency may consider any comments submitted by the partnership in support of the employee.

[67-9010, added 2007, ch. 238, sec. 1, p. 707.]